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EDITORIAL COMMENT



THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS THE SUPERINTENDENTS' SOCIETY

THE Washington convention four years ago marked an era in nursing progress, and the coming together of the three nursing organizations in Minnesota during the first week in June has again emphasized the marvellous growth of the nursing associations and the rapid strides which the profession is making along many divergent lines of progress.

The programs were carried out practically as announced. At the meeting of the superintendents in the auditorium of the Hotel Ryan, St. Paul, on the afternoon of Monday, June 7, the names of but fifty-one members of the society were shown on the register, but the hall was packed to the doors by an audience composed of delegates to the other associations and nurses from the community. At each session the room was filled in the same manner.

The president, Mrs. Robb, was in her most gracious form. The trend of the papers and discussions was for the more careful preparation of the pupil in training for the constantly increasing responsibilities which society is forcing upon her. The key-note of Mrs. Robb's address to the superintendents was that they must themselves be first of all good practical nurses, observing personally the work of their nurses in the wards rather than administering the affairs of their school from their offices, with a plea for the establishment in the great centres of central directories which should control all forms of nursing work.

It is impossible to comment on all the special features of these meetings. The report of the Committee on Education, presented by Miss Nutting, included, among other valuable suggestions, an outline prepared by a special committee appointed during the year for home care of the sick to be recommended for the use of the Red Cross, schools, and

organizations which feel the necessity of establishing work of this kind. Miss Nutting reported two conferences of this Committee on Education with the education committee of the American Hospital Association in which, it is gratifying to learn, the attitude of that committee was in support of all the more important advanced measures of the teaching body.

The committee reported also the establishment of a preliminary course for students of training schools at Teachers' College and stated that the college will assume the greater part of the expense of maintaining the course in Hospital Economics when the classes shall have grown larger, fifty or seventy-five, as is the case in other departments.

In the report of the special committee appointed during the year on reorganization, of which Miss Gladwin was the chairman, it was shown by a canvass of the members that the consensus of opinion among them was against any form of amalgamation which would cause a loss of identity of the society, and that this opinion was held most strongly by those longest in the association. The vote taken confirmed this, although the decision was unanimous that, at least for a time, the meetings should be held at the same time and place as the Associated Alumnae.

The paper read by Miss Erdmann on training-school committees brought out a vigorous discussion, showing that large numbers of schools are without such committees, and that committees representative of all departments of the hospital should be established as being a means of promoting the welfare of the training school and protecting its standards from reactionary measures.

Another paper which brought out much animated and lively discussion was that of Miss Martha Russell, of the Sloane Maternity, New York, on the preparation of the student nurse for obstetrics. It resulted in the question of the amount of time to be devoted to the study being referred to a committee which will submit at the next meeting an outline of what the course should cover.

The paper on the nursing of nervous diseases by Elsie M. Lawler, of Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, also gave rise to very animated discussion on the care of the nervous and insane, which question was also referred to the Committee on Education with instructions to make a study of the whole broad question of the nursing of the insane and to submit recommendations to the members.

Miss Nutting was elected president for the coming year, the next meeting to be held in New York City. The secretary's report of the official proceedings is found on another page and the papers and proceedings will be published in book form and sent to the members. Extra

copies may be ordered by applying to the newly elected secretary, M. Helena McMillan, at the Presbyterian Hospital, Chicago, Ill.

THE FEDERATION

The Federation of Nurses convened at the First Baptist Church in Minneapolis on Wednesday, June 9, with Miss Nutting, the president, in the chair. On account of pressure of time, a few papers whose writers were not present to read them were given by title only. Miss Nutting, in her opening address, emphasized the importance of intelligent co-operation with other groups of workers on matters of the public welfare, speaking particularly of suffrage, prohibition, and moral prophylaxis. She expressed her approval of laying aside for a time efforts to increase the Hospital Economics endowment which has now reached such figures that it is free from immediate embarrassment, and of concentrating all effort for this year in increasing the JOURNAL Purchase Fund of the Associated Alumnæ.

While all the reports and papers presented at this meeting were of a very high order of excellence, we can mention here only that of Dr. Richard Olding Beard, professor of physiology at the University of Minnesota, entitled "The University Education of the Nurse." In this he reviewed broadly the subject of higher education and announced the establishment at the University of Minnesota of a department of nursing. A hospital is being built on the University campus for the teaching of nurses and young medical students; enough graduate nurses are to be employed to make it possible for the pupil nurses to be a part of the University student body, with an eight-hour day. Following this paper, and upon the suggestion of Miss Helena McMillan, superintendent of the Presbyterian School of Nurses, Chicago, a committee was appointed to send a letter of recommendation to the universities of the country asking that such courses shall become a part of the regular university curriculum.

At the close of this meeting, after the appointment of the four delegates to the International Council of Nurses, to be held in London in July (Miss Goodrich, Mrs. Robb, Miss Delano, and Miss Cadmus), instruction was asked for these delegates on the suffrage question. The vote taken was in the negative.

THE ASSOCIATED ALUMNÆ

The Associated Alumnæ was called to order by the president, Miss Damer, at ten o'clock on Thursday morning, at the same place, the First Baptist Church. As undoubtedly all the papers and proceedings

of this meeting will be given in full in an early number of this magazine, we give space now only to comments on a few subjects of national importance.

Mrs. Robb, chairman of the committee on the Red Cross, presented a very carefully prepared report of the work of her committee, which included a report of conferences held with the officers of the National Red Cross in Washington, with suggestions submitted to them by the committee, and those suggested by the Red Cross in return. This last proposal was that, in the formation of a special nursing department of the National Red Cross, the government shall be in the hands of a committee of sixteen, of whom nine shall be nurses, nominated by the nursing associations. Resolutions to accept this proposal were presented and spoken to favorably by Misses Delano, Dock, Davis, Nevins, Palmer, and others, and after a very thorough discussion were unanimously adopted. The Red Cross committee, which was re-elected, was instructed to work out such a plan in detail with the National Red Cross.

Miss Damer, in her address, referred to the question of the growing necessity for reorganization, and after the paper on "State Societies, Their Organization and Place in Nursing Education," a general discussion followed which resulted in the recommendation that a committee be appointed to outline a plan for the reorganization of all our nursing bodies, beginning with the unit, including a recommendation by Miss Cooke, of the *Pacific Coast Nursing Journal*, speaking from experience of the successful working out of such a plan, that the subscription to the official organ of the society, THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING, shall be included in the membership dues.

One of the most important of the many discussions that took place was that on the increasing of the JOURNAL Purchase Fund, in which the facts were brought out that during the past few years the society has generously responded to appeals for financial support for the course in Hospital Economics and for the Tuberculosis Congress in Washington. While contributions to the JOURNAL Purchase Fund have added only six shares to those held by the Associated Alumnæ. A plan was proposed by Miss S. F. Palmer, whose appeal was made not as editor of the JOURNAL but as a charter member of the association and one of the original stockholders of the JOURNAL, that each affiliated member of the society be asked to contribute fifty cents as her share of the balance of the Purchase Fund. This was taken up with enthusiasm, the first response coming from the representative of a school in southern California, and in a few minutes pledges were made to the amount of over \$3000.

If this amount of money can be turned in before the first of Decem-

ber, the Associated Alumnae will own, at the next stockholders' meeting, more than sixty shares out of the one hundred, and it is confidently expected that the entire fund will have been raised before the next convention.

As has already been announced in these pages, the withdrawal of Miss McIsaac, who was the unanimous choice for the presidency, necessitated that the nomination for that office be made from the floor. Objections had been raised to the candidate put forward by the nurses of New England and the west, Miss S. F. Palmer, on the ground that her editorship of the *JOURNAL*, if combined with the presidency, would place too much power in the hands of one person, but all happily compromised on Miss Jane A. Delano, of New York, who, upon Miss Palmer's request, made the second candidate and was elected. Miss Delano was formerly the superintendent of nurses at Bellevue, and is not at the present time actively engaged in nursing work, but is associated with the work of the Red Cross.

A resolution was presented by Miss Gladwin, representing the alumnae association of the Boston City Hospital, expressing appreciation of the long, faithful, and efficient administration of the affairs of the association by the retiring president, Miss Annie Damer.

The Social Side

The entertainments were most enjoyable. The Minnesota nurses spared no pains in providing for the pleasure and comfort of their guests, in spite of the fact that the hotel managers failed to keep faith with them on account of another convention of men which was held during the same week and which monopolized the services originally intended for the nurses. The cordiality of the welcome and the interest of the meetings more than counterbalanced what little discomfort some of the members experienced.

The picnic held at Minnehaha Falls on the afternoon of Thursday was one of the most novel that the convention has ever enjoyed. Each member was provided with a most inviting lunch box in the form of a suit case, containing the essentials for an enjoyable picnic supper, and covered with advertising labels made to represent the tags which are the pride of foreign travellers. There were a few automobile parties made up at this time, but the majority of the members were given a ride in special cars, making the rounds of the two cities and arriving at the picnic grounds at seven o'clock, where tables were attractively spread and delightful music was provided.

Luncheon was served between the session in the parlors of the

church for twenty-five cents by the local nurses which gave the members the opportunity to come together in groups as they might desire. The rest rooms were comfortable, and every possible need of the guests was anticipated and most delightfully cared for. We hardly know how to express our appreciation of the hard work and kindly foresight of the hostesses.

Entertainment by the Chicago Nurses

Delegates who arrived in Chicago in the middle of the afternoon, hot and tired, on the going journey, were met by delegations of Chicago nurses with automobiles in which the entire company of travellers were taken on a most delightful and refreshing ride through parks, past the University, and along the Lake Shore, returning to the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul station just in time for supper before boarding the train for St. Paul. This was a delightful surprise and was most refreshing to those from the east after a rather irritating journey.

The arrangements for transporting the baggage across the city and to the train were complete. A representative of the St. Paul road met the incoming parties and took entire charge of these arrangements, even accompanying the train to Minneapolis to see that all went smoothly. This was in marked contrast to the service on the official train from the east, where promises made to the Committee of Arrangements were not kept, reservations had not been held, and the officials were far from courteous,—illustrations of what a railroad may do to serve its patrons and what it may fail to do. It is only fair to the roads having shown a willingness to take such pains as the western roads have done this year and last to remember which they are, and it is but just to resolve never again to patronize the eastern road which has now a second time failed to live up to its agreements. This comment includes no criticism of the transportation committee of the association which made every effort to have the entire journey as satisfactory as was the latter part.

THE VIEW-POINT OF A PATRIARCH

As the train drew near St. Paul, carrying several car loads of delegates, we overheard an amusing comment from one of the younger members, whose stylish hat proclaimed her to be from New York. Rushing into our car from a journey of inspection through the long train, she exclaimed: "Mrs. Hunter Robb is here, and all the old patriarchs, Miss Maxwell, Miss Davis, and——" bringing herself up with a round turn as she discovered another one of the venerable band at her elbow.

We feel sure that we express the sentiment of all the patriarchs when we say that the growth of the association as shown from year to year in these meetings, while it is far beyond any anticipations that were held at the beginning, brings with it its own reward for the efforts made by the founders of the work. One cannot fail to be impressed with the great divergence of interests and subjects which are each year developing and which must be reckoned with more and more as the years go on.

The rapidly increasing power of the west, as represented in numbers, in leadership, and in educational progress was one of the marked characteristics of the Minnesota meetings.

As in general education it is coming to be recognized that the west is furnishing the advanced thinkers and leaders, so it is more than likely that in our professional life the fresh vigor and advanced leadership are to be expected from that quarter.

The representation from the states that have recently secured state registration was one of the interesting features. Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, Texas, and Washington were represented by delegates able to take their places in the presentation of papers and discussions, while the editor of the *Pacific Coast Journal*, Miss Cooke, was one of the leading lights of the convention.

A VISIT TO CRANFORD FARM

After the interest, the stress, and the strain of convention week, three days were spent in the peace and quiet of the congenial atmosphere of Cranford Farm. During the four years since we have visited Miss McIsaac, the Cranford ladies have brought nature to their assistance in establishing hospital order and precision on the farm. Such orderly trees, such well-disciplined berry bushes, such a productive asparagus bed, and such perfectly shaped and flavored strawberries we have never seen. The summer vegetables free from weeds and insects could rival in their even rows the beds of a hospital ward after the morning doing-up. As regularly as we sat down to a meal, two well-trained little blue birds sat on identically the same twigs and with proper dignity and decorum inspected the process through the window. Within doors the simple artistic setting of the house and the appetizing dishes which the literary mistress prepared demonstrate again that hospital principles are applicable to every-day life. One loses consciousness of the hard labor which has been necessary for the production of such results when in the society of the two congenial women who have lost nothing of their hold upon their profession or of general education and culture by their residence in the country.

Miss McIsaac has now in press with the Macmillan Company a book on bacteriology for nurses which has been compiled and simplified from the best authorities on the subject after very careful study and laboratory research on her part. This book will, we believe, fill a long-felt want in the training school and will be ready for the opening of the fall term of study.

THE LAST WORD FOR THE SEASON ON STATE REGISTRATION

THE Michigan and Pennsylvania bills for the state registration of nurses are to be found under their state headings in the Official Department. In both of these states the struggle has been long and the opposition so bitter that we are surprised that the results as shown by the bills are so good.

In the Pennsylvania bill many objectionable amendments were cut out by the effort of the nurses, and the bill as a whole is much better than when we last saw a copy of it. The majority of the Board of Examiners being physicians is an unsatisfactory feature, but it is to be hoped that the governor will be moved to appoint the kind of men who are in sympathy with the highest nursing ideals, and that in time the bill may be amended to meet the wishes of the nurses of the state.

During the past winter eight states have been successful in securing laws that give to nursing a legal status. These are Washington, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Missouri, Texas, Michigan, Pennsylvania. Two have failed, Tennessee and Massachusetts, but when success comes to these states we predict that the standards will be high. Such contests as some of the states have had have served to bind the nurses together in stronger bonds of friendship, have educated the rank and file to a clearer conception of what the movement means, and have educated the public more broadly in all matters pertaining to nursing affairs so that the time has not been lost.

It will be ten years in November since a definite plan for the state registration of nurses was first proposed. The movement has proved to be the greatest educator of the period, in which we like to feel that the JOURNAL has had a leading place.

THE RED CROSS

WE dare to believe that in the next ten years nurses all over the United States will become a part of the organization of the Red Cross, thereby becoming a working force in the great international movement for the prevention and alleviation of suffering for which the Red Cross stands.

The action taken by the Associated Alumnae to affiliate with the Red Cross marks another era in nursing history. We cannot hold back in this movement if we are the right kind of women and the right kind of nurses.

THE JOURNAL'S FUTURE MANAGEMENT

AFTER the action taken by the Associated Alumnae, to which we have already referred, for raising funds for a complete ownership of the JOURNAL, there were many questions asked us privately by nurses as to what the effect would be upon the JOURNAL when the management is taken over entirely by the Associated Alumnae. Would it change the personnel of the staff? Would it be subject to the fluctuating policy of the association as a whole? In other words, would it be as safe? To those who have had such doubts which have not been satisfactorily answered, we want to say that so far as we understand the situation the present form of incorporation of the Associated Alumnae, while it permits the investment of funds, does not give authority for the transaction of such business as is necessary for the management of the JOURNAL. Consequently, the Associated Alumnae in its general plan for reorganization would need to consider the necessity of reincorporation in such a manner as to allow it to carry on the business of conducting the magazine. That this is done satisfactorily by other national associations, such as the American Medical Association, gives assurance that it can be done by the Associated Alumnae. The plan followed by the American Medical Association and which would be adaptable to our needs is the appointment of a publication committee, whose members serve in groups of three, for three years each, the terms expiring at different times, so that there is a stable management and the business details are not trusted to the inexperienced judgment of a great mass of people. If such a committee is appointed it will be the privilege of the association to make it represent all sections of the country and to select women of experience and recognized business sagacity. This is the plan which we have been working toward from the beginning and all these years have been an education for it.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTORIES

WE have been frequently told when trying to inaugurate some needed nursing movement that we ought to wait a while, the time is not ripe for the experiment, etc. As evidence of our deliberation along some lines let us turn to the JOURNAL for December, 1903, and read of conditions of directories existing then in New York. Have we moved so far or so rapidly from these conditions in the past six years? We may

find to-day in the heart of the city on the wall of a building on a street corner this sign with the red cross above it: "Special department. Male and female nurses. Graduates and experienced nurses for private cases, hospitals, sanitariums, etc. All applicants for employment will be treated with kindness and consideration." Other signs advise patrons that within all kinds of domestic help may be obtained.

READING FOR INVALIDS

IN the April number of *New York Libraries*, a periodical which can doubtless be found in any local library, is an interesting article by Martha Thorne Wheeler on "Reading for Invalids." She refers to an article published in the JOURNAL for June, 1908, by Josephine Kulzick on the same subject, and proceeds to give a long and valuable list of books which might be selected with advantage by the nurse who finds herself at a loss to know what to read to the convalescent or chronic patient.

The list is compiled from those presented by students in the New York Library School who were given the subject to work upon. There are one hundred titles, and such short comments are given as will show the reader what sort of book she is selecting.

COMMENCEMENT NOTICES

LAST year we were obliged to cut out all the commencement notices from one number of the JOURNAL, there were so many, and they would have crowded out so much material of value. This year by much abbreviation and by omitting the names of the graduates we are able to give a few lines to each, and regret the disappointment which will be felt by those who have taken pains to send us full accounts of exercises which are of such moment to those concerned.

SUMMER HOMES FOR TIRED NURSES

WE want to call the attention of our readers in the east to the announcement among the New Hampshire items of the Martha Parsons Fund and to the communication from Miss Frederick in the letter department, both telling of summer homes for the benefit of nurses who are ill or in great need of rest. To those who have used their strength in caring for others and who have not the means to give themselves the necessary rest, such offers will come as a pleasant sort of "bread upon the waters."